

OpenVoiceNews U.S.

Transparent. Unbiased. Yours.

SpaceX Launches International Crew Toward ISS in NASA's Crew-11 Mission

August 2, 2025

– Categories: Breaking News



SpaceX successfully launched a four-member astronaut crew toward the International Space Station (ISS) on Friday morning from Florida's Kennedy Space Center, marking another routine but impressive milestone in the National Aeronautics and Space Administration's (NASA) ongoing Crew Program. The mission, designated Crew-11, includes astronauts from the United States, Japan, and Russia, and is expected to reach the ISS after a swift 16-hour flight.

The SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket lifted off at 11:43 a.m. Eastern Time (ET), overcoming looming cloud cover that had already delayed the launch by a day. On board the Dragon Endeavour capsule were NASA astronauts Zena Cardman and Mike Fincke, Japanese Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA) astronaut Kimiya Yui, and Russian space agency Roscosmos cosmonaut Oleg Platonov. With Cardman in command and Fincke as pilot, the international crew is en route to a months-long stay aboard the orbiting laboratory.

“I have no emotions but joy right now. That was transcendent, the ride of a lifetime,” Cardman radioed after reaching orbit, celebrating her first flight. Fincke, a veteran of three previous missions, added, “Boy, it’s great to be back in orbit again! Thank you to SpaceX and NASA to get us here. What a ride!”

The launch was originally scheduled for Thursday but was halted just 67 seconds before liftoff due to unfavorable weather. On Friday, conditions remained marginal, but mission control ultimately gave the green light. Just over two minutes after liftoff, the Falcon 9’s first stage engines shut down and the stage separated, with the second stage’s single Merlin engine carrying the capsule into orbit. Meanwhile, the reusable booster executed a precise return, landing successfully at the Cape Canaveral Space Force Station, SpaceX’s 65th successful Florida landing and its 484th booster recovery overall.

Roughly one minute after the second stage engine shut down, the Crew Dragon Endeavour separated and began its autonomous journey to the ISS. The crew is expected to dock with the station’s Harmony module at approximately 3:00 a.m. ET on Saturday, completing a direct and shortened trajectory made possible by the timing of Friday’s launch.

This mission continues SpaceX’s role as a reliable commercial partner to NASA, providing routine crew transport to low Earth orbit. As international collaboration in space exploration deepens, missions like Crew-11 serve as a testament to both technological progress and shared commitment among spacefaring nations. With another successful launch behind them, SpaceX and NASA reaffirm their leadership in manned spaceflight while keeping the U.S. space program at the forefront of innovation and international cooperation.